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Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include amendments to Figs. 2, 8, 9 and 10. In one sheet for Fig. 2, a clearer drawing of its elements are provided. In each sheet for each of Figs. 8, 9 and 10, each sheet is labelled "prior art".

Attachments: Four Replacement Sheets

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REMARKS

In the Office Action of September 15, 2004, Examiner objected to Figure 2 for clarity issues and Figures 8-10 for labelling issues. Examiner objected to claims 8, 9 and 13 for informalities. Also Examiner rejected the following claims:

claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. 112; claims 1, 3, 7, 9-11 and 14-19 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) in view of U.S. patent 6,745,203 of Garg ("Garg");

claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garg in view of subject matter on which the Examiner took official notice;

claims 2, 4, 5, 12, 20, 21 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garg in view of U.S. patent 5,911,138 to Li ("Li");

claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garg in view of U.S. patent 5,696,964 to Cox ("Cox"); and

claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garg in view of U.S. patent 6,363,377 to Kravets ("Kravets").

Applicant traverses each of the rejections as follows.

Applicant provides a replacement Figure 2 providing a cleaner image of the screen shot shown therein. Applicant provides replacement Figures 8, 9 and 10 with a "prior art" label on each sheet.

Applicant herein adds cancels claims 1-22 herein and adds new claims 23-37. Exemplary support for all the 20-35 claims in Fig. 2 with corresponding description in the specification at page 5, line 28 to page 7, line 2 and in Figs. 3-7 with corresponding description in the

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specification at page 7, line 4 to page 10, line 6. No new subject matter is provided with the present amendments.

As there are several differences between the claims as originally filed and the claims provided herein, for the sake of clarity, Applicant addresses each piece of prior art cited by the Examiner against the whole set of claims provided herein.

Applicant submits that claims 23-37 define patentable subject matter in view of the prior art cited by the Examiner. In particular, Applicant's invention as claimed relates to a system and method where a GUI is provided allowing a user to build a query command, without having to enter a database command by activating one of several query buttons provided in the GUI. The query commands include: start, add, remove, select and undo. The user simply identifies an attribute field and a value for the field for command operands and then initiates the appropriate command button. For the add, select and remove commands, the commands build upon the current answer set to generate a new current answer set. Once the command is executed, the results are displayed and a summary of the command is added to the end of a command summary list. The list provides an easy-to-understand history of the commands. By viewing the history, the user can then make modifications to the query results. For example, an amendment can be made to current search results by entering a new set of search parameters, then activating the "add" button to search for elements matching the new search parameters.

Meanwhile, the user interface shown in Garg is limited to providing a one-time query or a persistent query. The only search command button provided in Garg is a "find" button. See Fig. 9 and Abstract. The interface in Garg does not have the flexibility of providing further modifying search results such as "add", "remove", "select" and "undo" in a single interface, as defined in Applicant's claims, as amended. As Garg does not have "add", "remove", "select" and "undo" functions, it does not teach Applicant's system of building answer sets based on previous answer sets.

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Further still, the user interface provided in Li requires a sophisticated understanding of database query commands. Command line database queries (such as SQL queries) are entered into a query window by a user. A query history is provided as a complicated tree display of queries and results. No simplified user interface is provided for initiating a search command. See Fig. 3D, and history window 103. In order to amend a query to add or remove results, the user is required to manually enter a complete database query command for the subsequent search. Meanwhile, Applicant's system and method as claimed allows a novice user to generate query commands without having specific knowledge of underlying database query syntax, by simply activating an appropriate command button and completing appropriate operand fields. As an example, Applicant's system provides a clear and simple GUI for results and search histories in two distinct windows, one window displaying the current results of a query and another separate window providing a simple list of summaries of commands. Further additional modifications can be made to current search results by entering new search parameters, then activating a required search command. Such elements are captured in Applicant's claims as provided herein.

Broadly, Li does not teach or suggest a system providing a GUI allowing simple entry and selection of different search commands and Garg does not teach or suggest a system providing an extensive set of search commands. Further neither Li nor Garg teach or suggest all elements of the claims as provided herein. As such, Applicant submits that the claims as provided are novel and unobvious in view of Garg and Li.

Examiner cited Cox as teaching a database search system where a search parameter includes images and video. Cox is directed towards a multimedia database system and does not teach the other aspects of Applicant's claims as provided herein. As such, Applicant submits that Applicant's claims as provided herein are novel in view of Garg, Li and Cox.

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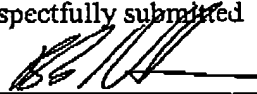
Examiner cited Kravets as teaching a database search system allowing wildcards in its search string. Kravets is directed towards a system for organizing database search results and does not teach the other aspects of Applicant's claims as provided herein. As such, Applicant submits that Applicant's claims as provided herein are novel in view of Garg, Li, Cox and Kravets.

In view of the above remarks, Applicant submits that the claims are in condition for allowance. Applicant earnestly solicits that this application be permitted to proceed to allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone to discuss this case further, if necessary.

Respectfully submitted

January 14, 2004

Date


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